

see the President personally to reiterate what he had said about his address and to lay before him in detail his plans for raising a military division to go to France. He added that the President had received him with the utmost courtesy and consideration and doubtless would, in his own good time, come to a decision. "I am," he continued, "heart and soul for the proposal of the Administration for universal obligatory military training and service. I would favor it for 3,000,000 men. You can call it conscription if you wish, and I would say yes. The division that I ask permission to raise would be raised exclusively among men who would not be taken under the conscription system. They would either be over 25 or of the exempted class, and they would eagerly enlist to go to the front."

Applications to enlist in his division poured in in such volume that on May 7, 1917, Roosevelt announced that they were coming in at the rate of over 2,000 a day, and that he was confident he could offer the Government the services of 250,000 men within a short time. In a speech in Brooklyn on May 8, 1917, he said: "I ask only that I be given a chance to render a service which I know I can render, and nine out of ten of those who oppose my rendering it do so because they believe I will render it too well."

The news of the proposed Roosevelt Division reached France and aroused general enthusiasm. Whitney Warren, an eminent American architect who was in Paris at the time, sent a cable message to the *New York Times*, on May 9, saying:

"The presence of an ex-President of the United States will send a thrill through the fighting line of the allies. He is known here as a leader of men, as was Kitchener, and it is he whom France awaits.'"

The proposal received quite general support in Congress and on May 16 the first bill providing for a draft, with a clause permitting the raising of volunteer divisions which was understood to authorize Eoosevelt to raise his division, was passed by large majorities in both houses, in spite of